DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 451 335 CE 081 401

TITLE	Funding for Inmate Academic and Vocational Programs. Florida Corrections Commission 1999 Annual Report, Section 8.
INSTITUTION	Florida State Corrections Commission, Tallahassee.
PUB DATE	2000-01-01
NOTE	13p.; Lead Analyst: Maxine J. McConnell.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://www.fcc.state.fl.us/fcc/reports/final99/8ed.html.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Education; Adult Basic Education; Adult Education; *Correctional Education; *Correctional Rehabilitation; Distance Education; Education Work Relationship; *Educational Finance; Federal Aid; Juvenile Justice; Literacy Education; *Outcomes of Education; Prisoners; Privatization; Program Effectiveness; Special Education; *State Programs; *Vocational Education; Youth Programs
IDENTIFIERS	*Florida; Return on Investment

ABSTRACT

The Florida Department of Corrections (DC) offers a variety of academic and vocational programs to a limited number of inmates. Funding is discretionary and provided through state general revenue, nine federal grants, and the Inmate Welfare Trust Fund. Profiles of typical Florida inmates indicate almost 75 percent of the inmate population test at a ninth-grade level or below and at or below basic literacy skills. Academic and vocational training for Florida inmates has yielded these positive results: a "return on investment" to taxpayers of $1.66 for every dollar spent; and fewer major discipline reports, higher earnings after release, more employment and staying off public assistance after release, and less recidivation. Educational services are also provided through Florida's five privatized correctional facilities and public education system. For Fiscal Year (FY) 1998-99, the DC served 32,187 inmates in academic, vocational, or special education programs at a cost of $28,407,704. For FY 1999-2000, $34,679,542 were appropriated. Innovative approaches such as distance learning show promise. Recommendations that support the DC's mission of preparing offenders for re-entry and release into society include: expand the use of the Corrections Distance Learning Network and target additional vocational programs toward DC youthful offender institutions. (21 endnotes) (YLB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 451 335

Florida Corrections Commission
1999 Annual Report
Section 8

Funding for Inmate Academic and Vocational Programs

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
J. Fuller
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CE081401

8. Funding for Inmate Academic and Vocational Programs

A. Background

The Department of Corrections offers a variety of academic and vocational programs to a limited number of inmates. Funding for these programs is through state general revenue, federal grants, and the Inmate Welfare Trust Fund. Unlike funding for public education, funding for these programs is discretionary.

Profiles of typical Florida inmates indicate that almost 75 percent of the inmate population test at a ninth-grade level or below, and test at or below basic literacy skills.[1] One of the most likely factors to a lower rate of recidivism is the ability to find and keep a job. Academic and/or vocational skills contribute to the ability to find a job.[2]

1. History of Correctional Education Nationally and in Florida

Correctional education began as early as 1789 when reformers were interested in teaching reading skills to offenders in order that they could study the Bible and thereby be saved.[3] Subsequent efforts by reformers viewed correctional settings as laboratories to research and test varying methods of instruction, and then apply the results to other school settings.[4] Educator David Snedden reported in his 1907 book, Administration and Educational Work of American Juvenile Reform Schools, such ideas as vocational, physical, and military (or "shock") education models and discussed how the public teachers could benefit from lessons learned by correctional teachers. In 1938, a session at a conference held by the American Association of School Administrators discussing the benefits of educational reform of offenders and reducing crime by better public education attracted over 2,000 attendees. The next year over 8,000 people attended a similar session on correctional education.[5]

Correctional educators and public educators face students with similar problems: they have dropped out of school, or were pushed out; they have experienced repeated failure in schools and are also embittered, apathetic, alienated; and they often have a history of violence or poor self-esteem. These students lack study skills and there is a high incidence of learning, emotional, and drug-related problems.[6]

Correctional education in Florida began in 1914 at the Raiford facility for men and used more educated inmates as instructors.[7] By 1957, Florida's prison system had expanded its education efforts to provide certified teachers to replace the inmate teachers. In 1982, the Florida Legislature directed the Department of Education to conduct a study on correctional education delivery services. At that time, local school districts and community colleges provided instruction to inmates. These services were provided through additional funding received through Florida's Educational Finance Plan and the Community College Finance Plan by

including inmates in their enrollment statistics. As a result of the Department of Education's study, the Council on Correctional Education was established by the 1983 Legislature.

The 1984 Legislature made substantial changes to correctional education by abolishing the Council on Correctional Education; prohibiting school districts and community colleges from requesting through Florida Educational Finance Plan or Community College Finance Plan funds for educating inmates; and directing that contracted education for inmate education be increased from 25 percent to 33 percent.[8]

In 1986, legislation established the Board of Correctional Education and the Correctional Education School Authority (CESA), a separate but attached agency to the Department of Corrections. This ended over 70 years of institutional-based correctional education programming and placed it into a centrally organized agency. CESA was directed to provide correctional education in the areas of adult basic education, general education development, and vocational education. Physical and personal health education classes and postsecondary courses for qualified inmates with financial resources were also to be provided. The Board hired a director to supervise the administration of all activities of CESA. [9]

CESA lasted from 1986 until abolished by the 1995 Legislature. During its tenure, CESA was plagued by numerous problems, including budget reductions, lack of reliable data, and unfavorable audits.[10] The 1995 Legislature returned education delivery services back to the Department of Corrections and is currently placed within the Office of Program Services.

2. Benefits of Providing Correctional Education and Vocational Training

Two different approaches studying the results of academic and vocational training to Florida inmates yielded positive results. The first approach studied the "return on investment" to taxpayers. The second studied consequences of provision of services not only when an inmate is released, but also during his or her incarceration.

Adopting a model developed by Florida TaxWatch and the Center for Needs Assessment and Planning, the department released its findings in June 1999 which discussed the returns on public investment in job training and educational programs delivered to inmates. The original model was developed for use by the Florida Department of Labor and Employment Security to determine the benefits (return on investment) of Job Partnership Training Act programs and to determine any needed improvements. The basic question asked in the department's study was, "How did the cost of educational inputs translate into earnings?"[11]

This "return on investment," characterized as the ratio of a dollar returned for a dollar of investment, looked at the amount of money returned for every dollar invested in correctional education in Florida. The result is considered positive if the ratio is greater than 1.0. The department looked at two years of follow-up of released inmates who had completed education programs.

For the first year, all groups of correctional-education completers for Fiscal Year 1993-94 had a combined return of $1.66 for every $1.00 invested. The highest return was for academic completers, with the next highest return for "high-tech" completers. For the second year, the combined return for all correctional programs was $3.20, with the identified highest savings from the low number of program completers reincarcerated after two years. Again, the highest return was for academic completers.

The second approach deals with Performance Based Program Budgeting measures for inmates who are enrolled in or completed correctional education programs. As reported by the department, they are:

- **Lower Major Disciplinary Report Rate for inmates who completed vocational, transition, or life skills training. For FY 1995-96, 719 major disciplinary reports were issued per 1,000 inmates who completed these programs as compared to 1,025 major disciplinary reports per 1,000 of the remaining inmate population.**

- **Fewer Major Disciplinary Reports for inmates who were enrolled in educational courses. For FY 1995-96, 684 major disciplinary reports were issued per 1,000 inmates who were enrolled in educational courses as compared to 917 major disciplinary reports per 1,000 of the remaining inmate population.**

- **Higher Earnings Levels After Release. For FY 1993-94 releasees, inmates who had completed an academic or vocational course were 14 percent more likely to have earning levels at or above a full quarter earning-level as defined by the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program than were the remaining inmates.**

- **More Likely to be Employed Upon Release. For FY 1993-94 releasees, inmates who had completed an academic or vocational course were 11 percent more likely to be employed during the last calendar quarter of 1994 than the remaining inmates who were released.**

- **Less Likely to Recidivate. For FY 1993-94 releasees, inmates who had earned a certificate (General Education Diploma or Vocational) through correctional education were 5 percent less likely to recidivate than the remaining population.**

- **More Likely to Stay Off Public Assistance. For FY 1993-94 releasees, the percent of inmates who had completed academic or vocational courses who were not receiving public assistance was higher than the remaining released inmate population who did not complete academic or vocational courses. This included Aid to Families with Dependent Children or food stamps and was during the fourth quarter of the calendar year following release.**[12]

3. Reported Costs for Education Programs

a. Department of Corrections

As stated previously, funding for academic and vocational programs in the department is discretionary and is provided through state general revenue, nine different grants, and the Inmate Welfare Trust Fund. See Appendix 8.1 for a description of these funds.

Generally, costs for education programs are reported on a per diem, or cost per day per inmate, amount. However, per diem rates make the assumption that all inmates are receiving some level of service, which is not accurate.[13] For FY 1997-98, this cost was $1.09 for all facilities (excluding private facilities) ranging from $.37 at the reception centers to $4.09 for youthful offender facilities.[14] The $1.09 converts to an annual amount of $398.

b. Correctional Privatization Commission

The Correctional Privatization Commission was created for the purpose of entering into contracts with private correctional management firms for the designing, financing, acquiring, leasing,

constructing, and operating private correctional institutions. Pursuant to section 957.04(1)(f), Florida Statutes, all Correctional Privatization Commission facilities must provide work and education programs designed to reduce recidivism. Therefore, these facilities are funded for these programs, and program costs are included in the contracted per diem rate. Currently, there are contracts for five privatized facilities:

- Bay Correctional Facility, a 750-bed medium security facility for adult male offenders, contracted with Corrections Corporation of America;
- Gadsden CF, a 768-bed medium security facility for adult female offenders, contracted with Corrections Corporation of America
- Lake City CF, a 350-bed medium security facility for male youthful offenders, contracted with Corrections Corporation of America;
- Moore Haven CF, a 750-bed medium security facility for adult male offenders, contracted with Wackenhut Corrections Corporation; and
- South Bay CF, a 1,318-bed close custody facility for adult male offenders, contracted with Wackenhut Corrections Corporation.

c. Florida Public Education System

Florida's public education system is funded primarily through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) which is a combination of state general revenue funds and local funds. The FEFP is formula driven, taking into account the number of students or Full Time Equivalents, multiplied by program cost factors multiplied by base student allocation.[15]

- Full Time Equivalents -- or FTEs (defined as 5 hours of instruction a day or 25 hours per week). The number of FTEs is determined by the Florida Consensus Estimating Conference and is developed for each of the educational programs. Schools participating must operate for a term of at least 180 actual teaching days.
- Program Cost Factors -- also known as program weights, is the three-year average cost per FTE for each of the programs.
- Base Student Allocation -- set annually by the Legislature in the General Appropriations Act. For FY 1999-2000 the base student allocation was $3,227.74.[16]

The FEFP also considers cost differentials per county, declining enrollment, sparsity, safe schools program, and a hold harmless provision.

For a school district to participate in the FEFP, the district must provide local funds, which are derived from ad valorem taxes that are set by the Legislature. Revenues generated from this source are deducted from the total FEFP in order to come up with the amount that the state provides for the FEFP.

Other state revenues separate from the FEFP include district discretionary lottery funds, special allocations, and categorical programs. An example of a categorical program is student transportation. Districts may also levy an additional discretionary property tax.

The FEFP is distributed to the school districts, which then divide the funds among their schools.

For FY 1999-2000 total potential funds (state and local) allocated for K-12 Public School Funding is approximately $11.3 billion with 62 percent derived from state funds ($7,009,599,411) and 38 percent from local funds ($4,277,960,041). The projected enrollment for K-12 (180 day Regular Term FTE only) is 2,336,063.[17]

d. Department of Juvenile Justice

Pursuant to Florida law, school districts are responsible for providing education services to youths housed in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) residential facilities. School districts provide these services either directly or through contractual arrangement. The school district is responsible for the quality of the services provided regardless if the services are conducted directly or through the contractual arrangement. Funding for DJJ educational programs is provided primarily through FEFP.[18]

The estimated amount of appropriation from the FEFP for FY 1999-2000 for DJJ offenders is $64,341,007. The adjusted base student allocation is $4,292.89.[19] The $64 million figure does not include any categorical funding for which these offenders qualify.[20]

B. Findings

1. Reported Costs for Education Programs

a. Department of Corrections

1). Fiscal Year 1998-99

For FY 1998-99, the department served 32,187 inmates in either academic, vocational, or special education programs for a total cost of $28,407,704. Table 8-A lists the estimated expenditures, number served, and the cost per number served.

Table 8-A

Department of Corrections
FY 1998-99 Estimated Costs
For Educational Programs

Program	Estimated Expenditures	Number Served	Cost per Number Served
Academic	$12,553,210.16	21,060	$596.07
Vocational	$11,461,952.89	7,537	$1,520.76
Special Education	$4,392,541.74	3,590	$1,223.55
Total			

Source: Bureau of Academic and Special Education, Department of Corrections, adapted by Commission staff

2). Fiscal Year 1999-2000

For FY 1999-2000, the department received an appropriation of $34,679,542 for academic, vocational, and special education programs. The difference between the two fiscal years can be largely accounted for by a "lump sum" appropriation in the 1999 Legislative Session and an additional federal grant received in the amount of $2.0 million. Charts 8-A and 8-B show the distribution of funding by program area and by source of funding.

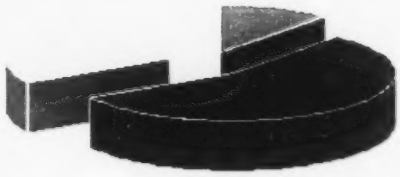
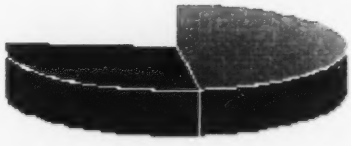


Chart 8-A

Source: Bureau of Academic and Special Education, Department of Corrections, adapted by Commission staff

Chart 8-B



Source: Bureau of Academic and Special Education, Department of Corrections, adapted by Commission staff.

3. Commission Estimated Costs per Full-Time Program Assignment

It is difficult to compare the above reported costs to funding for the other agencies listed. Another method of reporting costs is to calculate the cost for a full-time academic or vocational program assignment using estimated expenditures for all of a program's activities. In the department, a full-time work or program assignment equates to six hours of activity five days a week year-round, with an additional two hours involved in inmate security, assignment of equipment, transportation (if necessary), and inmate count before and after the activity. Total program assignments as of June 30, 1998 were 44,168, and decreased to 43,765 as of June 30, 1999.

On June 30, 1998, there were 2,874 full-time academic slots and 2,531 vocational slots. As of June 30, 1999, these numbers had changed slightly, to 3,044 academic slots and 2,526 vocational slots, in spite of the lump sum appropriation of $4.2 million this fiscal year. Special education services are not identified as program assignments as these are overlay services. As shown in Table 8-B, using the number of slots as opposed to number of inmates served, the following costs are derived: $4,367 for academic programs, and $4,258 for vocational programs. These figures do not include special education overlay services costs.

Table 8-B

Commission Estimated Costs for Department of Corrections
Academic and Vocational Program Assignments

Program	FY 1998/99 Estimated Expenditures	June 30, 1998 Program Assignments	Cost per Assignment/Slot
Academic	$12,553,210.16	2,874	$4,367
Vocational	$11,461,952.89	2,531	$4,258

Source: Compiled from information from the Department of Corrections

Of the academic and vocational slots, 1,116 and 405, respectively, were located at youthful offender institutions. Using the above costs per assignment/slot calculations, estimated expenditures for educational programs (not including special education services) for youthful offenders for FY 1998-99 were $4,873,572 and $1,724,490 for academic and vocational programs, respectively, for a total cost of $6,598,062.

As a point of referral, if the department received funding under the FEFP formula for all inmates age eighteen and under, the amount would be similar to estimated expenditures. As of June 30, 1998, the department housed 1,513 inmates for that age group. Using the Department of

Juvenile Justice cost per FEFP of $4,292, this amount would be $6,493,796. Pursuing funding from the FEFP may be futile, as the state is funding education programs for this population at a similar level as it would be entitled to under the FEFP formula.

b. Correctional Privatization Commission

Table 8-C lists the estimated per diem rates for education programs at the Correctional Privatization Commission contracted facilities.

Table 8-C

Estimated Per Diem Amounts for Educational Programs
At Correctional Privatization Commission Contracted Facilities

Facility	Per Diem	Annual Amount
Moore Haven	2.46	$897.90
Lake City (educational)	2.19	$799.35
Lake City (vocational)	1.92	$700.80
South Bay	2.59	$945.35
Bay	2.29	$835.85
DC Facilities	***1.09***	***$397.85***

Source: Correctional Privatization Commission, 9/17/1999, and Department of Corrections Annual Report 1997-98.

The CPC also provided information related to contract requirements for academic, vocational, and other programs. While the private vendors had supplied estimated costs for these programs, some of these costs included personnel costs and some did not. Contract requirements also varied among the private vendors. The CPC is currently reviewing all of their contracts with the goal of producing standardized program requirements. Given the variables among the contracts, estimated program costs were not calculated.[21]

2. Comparison of Costs of Education Programs

Table 8-D compares the department, the Correctional Privatization Commission, the Department of Juvenile Justice, and K-12 methods of funding, the number of days in the calendar year that services are provided, the amount per slot, and then calculates the cost per hour of each slot. In comparing costs per slot per program, the number of hours involved must be taken into consideration. Therefore, this calculation shows that the department's cost for provision of educational services is lower than both the Department of Juvenile Justice and public education grades K-12.

Table 8-D

Comparison of Education Funding

Agency	Method	Days	Amount per Slot	Cost per Hour of Slot
Department of Corrections *(FY 1998-99)*	Discretionary – funded provided to department	Year Round – 250 days, 6 hours per day (1,500 hours)	$4,367/ $4,258	$2.91/$2.83
Correctional Privatization Commission *(FY 1998-99)*	Included in contractual per diem rate – provided to contractor	Year Round – 250 days, 6 to 7 hours per day	Not presented	Not presented
Department of Juvenile Justice *(FY 1999-00)*	FEFP – funding provided to school districts	Year Round – 250 days, 5 hours per day (1,250 hours)	4,292.89	$3.43
K-12 *(FY 1999-00)*	FEFP – funding provided to school districts	180 days, 5 hours per day (900 hours)	3,227.74	$3.58

Source: Compiled from information from Correctional Privatization Commission, Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Justice, and Florida Legislature.

3. Profile of Educational and Literacy Levels of Department of Corrections Inmate Population

To what extent is education needed for inmates? As of June 30, 1999, the inmate status population was 68,599. Available data for tested education levels as of the same date show that almost 75 percent of the inmate population test at a ninth grade level or below. Over 24,000 inmates are serving sentences for five years and under, and 78 percent of this group test at a ninth-grade level or below. See Appendix 8.2 , Tested Education Levels for Inmate Population.

Literacy levels, or reading skills, show that over 63 percent of all inmates on June 30, 1999, test at or below a ninth grade reading level. Sixty-seven percent of inmates serving sentences for five years and under also test at or below a ninth grade reading level. See Appendix 8-3 , Tested Literacy Levels of Inmate Population on page ---.

Sixty-three percent, or over 43,000 of the inmates came from the following ten counties in descending order: Dade, Broward, Hillsborough, Duval, Pinellas, Orange, Polk, Palm Beach, Escambia, and Brevard. The majority of these inmates test at the seventh grade level or below. (See Appendix 8-4.)

Of the status population, there were 13,621 offenders age 24 and younger, of which 4,391 were designated as youthful offenders. Education levels for this group of offenders indicate that 74 percent tested at a ninth-grade level or below, and 61 percent tested at or below basic literacy skills. (See Appendix 8-5.)

There are clear benefits to providing academic and vocational programs to Florida's inmates. Priority II of the department's Agency Strategic Goals is to "prepare offenders for re-entry and release into society." Traditional methods of teaching this population are not the only way to deliver services. After all, it is likely that this is the population that dropped out of public school.

Innovative approaches such as distance learning recently undertaken by the department show promise. The Model Distance Learning Classroom Project, which used interactive videoconferencing, demonstrated positive results. All of the fall 1998 class participants obtained a General Education Diploma; the spring 1999 General Education Class completers averaged an increase of 1.02 in their Tests for Adult Basic Education scores. The Star Schools Grants will provide all youthful offender institutions a technology-based network of interactive educational programs. Offenders at these institutions will have the ability to instantly resume their education even if they are transferred to another youthful offender institution. The department recently was awarded another Star School Grant that will focus on the specific needs of adult offenders. For a more detailed review of distance learning in the department and the Commission's recommendations for that issue, see Section 7, "Florida Department of Corrections' Distance Learning Program" of this report.

Basic academic programs while not supplanted by technology, can certainly become more efficient and applicable to the changing inmate population. However, the technology has not been developed for delivering vocational programs, as these require more "hands-on" teaching.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations support the Department of Corrections' mission by preparing offenders for re-entry and release into society. Recommendations 1 and 2 are the same as in Section 7, Florida Department of Corrections' Distance Learning Program.

1. **The Department of Corrections should continue to expand the use of the Corrections Distance Learning Network to increase the efficiency and cost savings in the delivery of offender programming and staff training.**

2. **The Department of Corrections should direct its efforts in offender educational program development to the distance learning model.**

3. **Funding for additional Department of Corrections inmate vocational programs should be provided, but on a per slot basis.**

4. **Additional vocational programs should target Department of Corrections youthful offender institutions.**

5. **Costs per slot for both Department of Corrections inmate academic and vocational programs should be calculated on an annual basis, using estimated expenditures for the prior year.**

Lead Analyst: Maxine J. McConnell

Notes on Section 8

[1] Bureau of Research and Data Analysis, Department of Corrections, Information, adapted by Commission staff

[2] Office of the Auditor General, State of Florida, *Performance Audit of Correctional Education Within the Department of Corrections and Administered by the Correctional Education School Authority* (December 12, 1989): i.

[3] Marilyn D. McShane and Frank P. Williams, III, editors, Encyclopedia of American Prisons; New York and London ,Garland Publishing, Inc. (1996):182.

[4] Ibid., 180.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Staff of Florida Senate Committee on Corrections, Probation and Parole, *A Report on the Correctional Education School Authority* (January 1991): 2.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid., 2-3.

[10] Office of the Auditor General: ii-iii.; Staff of the Senate Committee on Corrections, Probation and Parole (January 1991): 8, 9; Staff of the Senate Committee on Corrections, Probation and Parole, *A Report on Enrollment and Management Practices in Correctional Education: The Use of Private Providers and Pell Grants* (September 1991): 3; Staff of The Florida House of Representatives, Committee on Corrections, *Oversight Report on The Correctional Education School Authority* (February 1993):154-158.

[11] Florida Department of Corrections, "*Return on Investment for Correctional Education in Florida,*" http://www.dc.state.fl.us/pub/taxwatch/index.html (July 19, 1999).

[12] Florida Department of Corrections, "Summary of Results of Performance Measures Related to Correctional Education," http://www.dc.state.fl.us/pub/pb2/corred/index/.html (July 19, 1999).

[13] Florida Senate, Committee on Fiscal Policy, *Revised Funding Methodology for the Department of Corrections*, Interim Project Report 2000-42 (August 1999): 3.

[14] Florida Department of Corrections, *1997-98 Annual Report, The Guidebook to Corrections in Florida* (October 6, 1998): 33.

[15] Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, *Florida's Education Funding System*, Report No. 95-50 (April 8, 1996): 3, 4-5.

[16] The Florida Legislature, *1999 General Appropriations Act and Summary Statement of Intent for Fiscal Year 1999-2000* (May 12, 1999): 41.

[17] Florida Senate, Committee on Budget, *Education Funding Summary 1999 2000* (undated): 3, 11,15.

[18] Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, *Review of Education Services in Juvenile Justice Residential Facilities*, Report No. 98-28 (December 1998): 2.

[19] This figure is derived from multiplying the projected DJJ FTEs (9,461.53) by program costs to arrive at a Weighted FTE figure (14,987.79) times the Base Student Allocation of $3,227.74, and then further adjusted for the difference in 180 days to 250 days (a 33 percent increase) to $4,292.89.

[20] Information provided by Department of Juvenile Justice.

[21] Information provided by the Correctional Privatization Commission, and interviews with La'tara Osborne and Sue Herring, staff of the Correctional Privatization Commission.

Table of Contents
Previous
Next
Home